

# LIVINGSTON EMPLOYER BREEZE

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## **2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL LIVINGSTON/TRI-COUNTY JOB FEST**

By Gail Habener

The Livingston Workforce Center will be hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Tri-County Job Fest on Wednesday, June 6, 2007 between the hours of 2:30 pm and 6:30 pm at the Livingston Civic Center. The Job Fest will coincide with the Farmers' Market and all the festivities of that weekly event.

The Tri-County (Park, Meagher and Sweet Grass) Job Fest will feature leading local employers, job opportunities, on-site interviews, and recruiting. Persons wanting to apply for job opportunities should bring a completed application or resume with them and be prepared to interview.

Employers will have the opportunity to accept applications, interview and speak with prospective employees. For Employer participation there will be a \$25.00 charge. To participate, Employers are encouraged to R.S.V.P. to Gail Habener at the Livingston Workforce Center, 222-0520, no later than April 12, 2007. You will be sent a confirmation and registration form and have the opportunity to complete it and return with your table fee.

Last year, employers were gracious in their survey participation and gave great feedback for improving the Job Fest. We are having the event during the week this year and later than the original May date. Most folks filling out the survey wanted more advertisement so look for us in the newspapers and we will be directly contacting employers with Tri-County Job Fest information. Look for banners and signs touting the event this summer. For your convenience, a registration form is included in this newsletter.

We are looking forward to seeing many new employers and would like to invite the employers who participated last year back again. See you at the JOB FEST!

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## **THE LEGISLATURE IS IN SESSION!**

By Jerri Miller

It's always a scary proposition when we send our Legislators to Helena. Just what are they doing up there anyway? Spending our tax dollars for sure! Here is the current status on some of the bills that pertain to employment law.

HB58—Will provide for unemployment insurance for a spouse who has to quit to move because of military service. Has been sent to the Senate on 2/15.

HB72-Revises the Professional Employer organization law. Passed hearings 3/9-probably will pass.

HB185—Provides for injunction and license revocation for hiring illegal aliens. Passed 3<sup>rd</sup> hearing on 2/27.

HB325—Will allow requirement for employees to be paid via electronic transfer. Tabled in Committee—may be dead?

HB513—Providing that employment that is not for a specified term for a period greater than 1 month is terminable at will by either the employer or the employee. Tabled in Committee—May be dead?

HB530—Provides rest breaks for certain employees. Tabled in Committee—Probably dead?

HB704—Revise prevailing wage laws—Tabled in committee on 2/22-probably dead

SB249-Revise workforce drug & alcohol Testing law—Failed on 3rd reading.

SB250-Provides for Right To Work. (Adverse Committee Report Adopted, hearing on 1/30—Probably dead)

SB346—Prohibits certain contracts with illegal aliens. (Hearing on 2/26-passed as amended)

SB490-Expand employee drug testing Law—Passed hearing on 2/22.

Of course there will be more! We will update these continuously until we go to press

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## **BOB KINCAID JOINS THE RANKS OF THE RETIREES**

Robert "Bob" Kincaid started working at the Livingston Job Service on August 21, 1994. Bob was a recently separated Veteran, after spending 20 years in the military. His service included multiple tours in Vietnam and he was a member of the



Marine Corp as well as the Army. Bob is highly decorated and his medals include a Purple Heart. Bob was hired as a "Local Veteran Employment Representative" and as an Employment Consultant. His dedication to the needs of the Veteran population was genuine and his

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performance at that job was excellent. There are many Veterans employed in our community as a result of Bob's efforts!

In addition to Bob's work with Veterans he assisted with clients who were laid off due to business closures. He has helped hundreds of individuals secure training or employment after a lay off. Over the course of 13 years, his case management and expertise has made a real difference in peoples lives!

Bob and his wife Lucy moved to Livingston in 1991 and have been active in local community and veteran organizations. Lucy is the office manager for A Plus Insurance in Livingston and a member of the Chamber of Commerce and Board of Directors for the Community Closet.

The Kincaids have purchased a small cattle farm in north central West Virginia and plan to ranch, farm and enjoy their grandchildren.

When Bob announced his retirement, we were happy for him, but sad to see a friend and colleague leave our office. Bob will retire effective March 31st, and we will have an Open House on March 30th from 1 pm to 5 pm. Please join us in wishing Bob a Great Retirement!

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### 15 EXCUSES FOR CALLING IN SICK

Contributed by Elizabeth Anderson

When you need a random day off work, what do you do? Do you schedule a vacation day with your boss, or call in with some overblown cover story? And just how long does it take you to come up with that excuse? With one-in-four workers considering sick days equivalent to vacation time, it's no wonder workers are so crafty at calling in sick.

CareerBuilder.com recently took a look at employees who call in sick with bogus excuses. Thirty-two percent of workers said they called in sick when they felt well at least once during the last year, down from 43 percent in the 2005 survey. This could be because some employers are evolving to a PTO (paid time off) system, which is a more flexible way for workers to take time off from work. But, workers should be mindful of company policies and their responsibilities as an employee.

The most popular motivator for missing work: good, old-fashioned R&R. Almost half of workers said they needed to relax, while 24 percent wanted to catch up on sleep. Other top reasons included running personal errands (20 percent), doctor appointments (17 percent), plans with family and friends (16 percent) and housework (16 percent).

Some employers said they typically don't question excuses given, but others were more skeptical. Almost half of employers have caught an employee calling in sick with a fake excuse; 27 percent said they have fired a worker for calling in sick without a legitimate reason.

Forty-one percent of hiring managers said they have received unusual or suspicious sick-day alibis. When asked to share the most unusual excuses workers gave for missing work, hiring managers revealed some of their favorite alibis:

1. Employee was poisoned by his mother-in-law.
2. A buffalo escaped from the game reserve and kept charging the employee every time she tried to go to her car from her house.

3. Employee was feeling all the symptoms of his expecting wife.
4. Employee called from his cell phone, saying that he was accidentally locked in a restroom stall and that no one was around to let him out.
5. Employee broke his leg snowboarding off his roof while drunk.
6. Employee's wife said he couldn't come into work because he had a lot of chores to do around the house.
7. One of the walls in the employee's home fell off the night before.
8. Employee's mother was in jail.
9. A skunk got into the employee's house and sprayed all of his uniforms.
10. Employee had a bad case of hiccups.
11. Employee blew his nose so hard, his back went out.
12. Employee's horses got loose and were running down the highway.
13. Employee was hit by a bus while walking.
14. Employee's dog swallowed her bus pass.
15. Employee was sad.

By Richard Castellini, Senior Career Adviser for CareerBuilder.com

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### WHERE'RE THE WORKERS?

By Skip Shiver

Back in 1984, the world was introduced to a novel Wendy's® commercial where three old ladies open a huge hamburger bun to find a very miniscule burger and one of them crassly yells, "Where's the Beef?" Let's fast forward to 2007. Envision a new ad featuring a General Manager screaming out a similar outraged demand, "Where're the Workers?" Sound familiar?

With indications of a strong national economy, low unemployment rates, wage increases, and other promising economic factors, conditions have become extremely favorable for workers to change jobs frequently or at least look for better job prospects. A recent national survey of employment trends implies that many workers know this is a favorable time to seek out new and better jobs. Survey responses indicated that workers are actually taking advantage of the situation in an effort to find what they really want. Job seekers are also using technologies that were essentially unavailable in the recent past that now make it virtually effortless to find and connect with new employers and job opportunities almost anywhere.

With this kind of movement taking place, advertising a job opening might seem like adding a side-dish to a mile-long smorgasbord. But before you start thinking about new incentives for attracting job seekers, you should know some facts. According to those same survey responses, **only 9%** of job seekers actually considered salary as the most significant indicator when contemplating a job offer. Nearly 46% thought that having a work vs. life balance was most important, while 41% said that a feeling of fulfillment was most important. By contrast to those numbers, approximately 39% of respondents ranked salary as the main thing they would change

about their current jobs, with about 12% citing benefits as the main thing to change. Some 27% of job seekers said they believe they could get a better salary in a new job.

Think about those numbers. A full 46% or nearly half of all survey respondents specified work vs. life balance as the most important consideration in job hunting. Based upon information like this, it seems that employers should now be more mindful that concepts of salary, benefits, work/life balance and fulfillment mean different things to each individual worker when recruiting. Does this mean that employers should consider offering twice as many part-time vs. full-time positions? Not necessarily, but the point is that these statistics are screaming that it's time to get creative. Even though this may make you feel like recruiting workers is an exercise in futility, there are a number of things you can do to help eliminate the guesswork. For example, ensuring that prospective new employees have a realistic sense of your workplace culture, your demands and expectations of their duties, how much work time and travel is required, the compensation offered, etc.

It might also be beneficial to consider how the attitudes and perceptions of workers have changed over the past 15-30 years. One of the more common employer complaints we hear today involves employee work ethic. Many employers feel that today's workers entering the workforce possess poor work ethic or none at all. Work ethic has traditionally been defined as a cultural norm that places a positive moral value on doing a good job and is based on the belief that work has intrinsic value for its own sake. Daniel Yankelovich, author of *New rules: Searching for self-fulfillment in a world turned upside down* reported findings which challenged the view that younger workers were less "committed" to the work ethic. He did however find a decline in the belief that hard work pays off.

That finding is not very surprising in an age where buzz words like "downsizing", "re-engineering" and "hostile takeover" have become household talk, not to mention huge corporate scandals like Enron. Yankelovich suggests a significant shift in dominant norms because pay and "getting ahead" have long been the primary incentives that management has used successfully during the industrial age to encourage productivity. If economic reward had lost its ability to motivate workers, he speculates, then productivity could be expected to decline, in the absence of some other reason for working hard.

So, are the workers really out there? You decide. The good news is that when you get down to looking for the right employees, early preparation on your part can be the key to success. Before you advertise a position or begin to interview, know what you really need in an employee. Prioritize what is most important to you and your business. Be prepared to convince a good prospect that your position is worth their commitment. Be prepared to explain starting wages that are based on experience (or the lack thereof), and when to expect an increase. Be upfront when asked about things like experience, training, compensation, benefits and time requirements. Let the candidate know where you stand and indicate whether or not you can offer any flexibility in your terms. Above all, be professional and show respect for all applicants and your current employees. Your actions during the interview, through negotiations, and in the workplace will be remembered by everyone long after you've hired.

## **ANNUAL ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESS CLINIC** **APRIL 24, 2007**

Once again, the Livingston Job Service Employer Committee is pleased to host the ASSISTANCE TO BUSINESS CLINIC (ABC) on April 24, 2007 at the Vince Grant Hall, **1306 E PARK STREET** in Livingston. If you perform any accounting or bookkeeping functions within a business or deal with Human Resource issues, this workshop is for you. We bring the "big guns" to town to help you understand the taxes that you are required to pay and what you get in return.

From the MT. Department of Labor and Industry,  
\*Wage and Hour                      \*Workers' Compensation  
\*Human Rights                      \*Unemployment Insurance Tax  
\*Safety Bureau                      \*Job Service Employer Services, &  
\*Unemployment Insurance Benefits

From the MT. Department of Revenue  
\*Withholding taxes—state and federal  
From Social Security Administration  
\*Electronic Wage Filing

All of this for the small sum of \$35.00 per person. This program is eligible for CPE and CLE credits for a number of professional organizations and other certification requirements. Pre-registration is required by calling 406-222-0520 or you may also register on-line at <http://wsd.dli.mt.gov/local/livingston/>. Click on the Business Customer/Employer Services link and printout the registration form. You can also register via e-mail to [jerrim@mt.gov](mailto:jerrim@mt.gov).

And, since we are keeping you from 7:45 am until 5:00 pm, we will provide breaks and lunch and all materials. Come check this out! You won't be sorry!

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## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS WORKSHOP**

By Jerri Miller

Over the years, I have served on many, many Boards of Directors with varying degrees of success and enthusiasm. Most of these positions have been as a volunteer, so there is no monetary incentive to achieve—just a good feeling! The bigger our population, the fewer volunteers we have available who are interested in serving on a Board. Depending on the makeup of the Board and the attitudes of the members, serving can either be fun and rewarding, or it can be miserable! It's all in what you want to make it.

Co-sponsored by Livingston Business and Professional Women's Organization and the JSEC, we are proud to offer a 12-hour workshop designed to help individuals who already serve or are wanting to serve on a Board. It can either be a public Board, such as the County Refuse or Planning Board, a private non-profit Board such as the Tri-County Network or Big Brothers/Big Sisters or maybe you are just wanting to start a non-profit and don't know where/who to go to for help.

The workshop will examine topics such as:

\*Writing that IRS 501 (c) (3) application;  
State and Federal requirements for corporations  
How to choose your Task Force Members and your Board Members and keep them motivated;  
Roberts' Rules of Order—Let's not go overboard here

\*Financial Planning and Management;

Marketing

Economics

Fundraising

Running a successful meeting

\*Policies and Procedures;

Volunteer and Recruitment Management

Organization and structure

Care and feeding of your Executive Director

Who's really the boss?

Insurance and Liability issues

Employment law

Board Performance and Assessment

\*Get that Grant!

You can attend one or all 4 sessions. The cost for each session is \$15.00 or all 4 for \$50.00. We will have samples of completed 501 applications which were successful in a short amount of time, bylaws, policies and procedures, articles of incorporation and some successful grant applications.

Please see the enclosed flyer to register for either the ABC Clinic or the Working With Boards workshops. Days, times, locations and costs are listed as well as registration information.

## STATISTICS, DECEMBER, 2006

		<u>U.S.</u>	<u>Montana</u>		
Unemployment Rate		4.5%	2.9%		
<u>AREA</u>	<u>Labor Force</u>	<u>Emp</u>	<u>Un-emp</u>	<u>%</u>	
Gallatin	49,069	48,129	940	1.9%	
Park	9,165	8,865	300	3.3%	
Meagher	912	877	35	3.8%	
Sweet Grass**	2,870	2,838	32	1.1%	

\*\*Sweet Grass continues to have the lowest unemployment rate in the state! Congratulations, again!

Check out the new Sweet Grass County Flier just completed by the Research and Analysis Bureau of the Dept. of Labor & Industry at <http://www.ourfactsyourfuture.org/>. This is a great site to find information about the economic and census information for nearly all counties in the State. Meagher County, yours' is coming soon!